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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT THRUSDAY, December 22, 1938.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "MORE FAMILY PROGRESS STORIES". Information from the Farm Security Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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With peace and good-will to men in the air at this season, it's encouraging to know that there is a "good-will" agency in the Federal government that translates its sympathetic attitude into constructive action.

The basic function of the Farm Security Administration is to help people to help themselves- farm people, who have touched bottom financially, and turned to the farm supervisor and farm home management supervisor of the F.S.A. for aid. Their "good-will" is expressed, first, in sitting down with the farm family in distress, to go carefully over the details of the family living and the farm business, in order to formulate a plan for the future. A loan is probably indicated, but as a loan is a burden until it is paid off, it should be as small as possible, meeting only what is urgent. The loan, however, should insure sound farm and home operation.

The family also needs a plan for living without much cash expenditure, and for running the farm to make it yield better money returns, and a better family living in terms of nourishing food, both eaten fresh and stored. Then the family may be able to pay back the loan little by little and get on its feet. Perhaps the best way to show how this works out is to tell you about some families that have greatly improved their situation in the last two or three years.

The P..... family moved out of the drought area in North Dakota to a different county in 1936. There were ten of them altogether- mother, father, and 8 children. They rented 160 acres of brush land, and planned to raise stock and small fruits, but soon were compelled to ask for aid in getting started. A "grant" was made at first, but a larger sum was needed to stock the place with sheep, cows, a team of horses, feed, and seed. A F.S.A. loan enabled them to start farming and was recommended.

Both the farmer and his wife were very much interested in the plans made for the future. The home supervisor suggested purchasing 1,000 strawberry plants, and a pressure canner to increase their winter supply of canned foods. They stored a large quantity of garden products the first season. Nearby woods supplied all the fuel they needed. A neighbor gave them rhubarb, and the brush on their farm was full of wild fruits which Mrs. P..... put up. She filled every container she could get.

It was too bad that the first winter this family suffered a severe set-back because Mrs. P..... had to have an operation. The doctor's bills were cared for by their Farmer's Mutual Aid Corporation membership, but the hospital bills taxed all their resources and again they had to ask for aid. However, the tide turned for them in the spring. Their cream income increased, soon garden vegetables

were ready to use or store, and the rhubarb and strawberries came into bearing. In fact, there were more orders for berries than could be filled. All this helped on the hospital bills, and the family is now definitely on the upgrade. The home management supervisor says that in a very few years they will be self-supporting and free from debt.

Somewhat similar is the story of the B..... family in Kansas. This family has 4 of its 6 children at home. The mother, says the home management supervisor, is very ambitious. She's a patient, kindly, sympathetic woman, too, cheerful and enthusiastic about her undertakings, in spite of hardships and low income. The B's live in a 4-room house which is in fair condition, though in need of some repairs. When the parents applied for a loan in 1936, much of their household equipment was entirely worn out. There was no money to get much-needed bedding, or laundry equipment. They had only 6 chairs.

The home management supervisor planned with them. She suggested that the sale of some of their chickens would bring in enough to buy a hand-power washer and 2 blankets, and that they might make 8 comforters. Mrs. B..... is a good seamstress, and she and her eldest daughter do all the family sewing. They can make over many things that are given them.

The farm stores ice for winter use, and Mr. B and the boys cut most of their wood right on the place. The whole family cooperates in making the garden a success. Mrs. B. and her high school daughter can a large supply of fruit and vegetables and make cottage and cream cheese.

The B..... farm is rented. There are 480 acres, of which 255 are in cultivation, mostly wheat. The landlord has certain requirements in farm practice that must be met. The farm supervisor recommended more diversification, more livestock and less wheat, to make a more balanced farm enterprise. There was no objection on the part of the owner. As the cattle already on hand showed extra good care, the farm supervisor also approved the purchase of 6 more cows, 400 chicks, and 10 small shoats, some for breeding and some for butchering.

The total loan needed by the B..... family was $925. In one year they had paid off $400 instead of the $300 that was due. Mr. B. has considerable wheat to sell. The poultry enterprise has been so successful that his flock ranked first in the county.

"This family has a fine attitude," says the home management supervisor. "They are very appreciative of the assistance they have received through the Farm Security Administration. The farm and home inventory has increased considerably, also the production from their cows; dairy products and eggs have kept the family in groceries. They feel much more secure through becoming self-supporting. They now have sufficient income, and have raised their standard of living. We believe them to be a farm family with high ideals, worthy of helping. And the best part of it is, they have been able to pay off their loan."

These examples of how the "good will" of the Farm Security Administration is constructively applied are but two out of about 650,000 cases where loans and technical guidance have been extended to families that cannot get credit elsewhere. The planning and methods learned during the time they operate under these loans are invaluable to them in the years that follow, when they are independent of further aid.

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